



UNIVERSITY OF
PENNSYLVANIA
MEDICAL CENTER

Richard Whittington, M.D.
Associate Professor

University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
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Mr. Mark R. Shaffer
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Region IV
611 Ryan Plaza Dr. Suite 400
Arlington TX 76001-8084
28 December 2001

Dear Mr. Shaffer:

I have reviewed the event description provided and discussed the event with Richard Crilly, the current physicist at Rapid City Regional Cancer Center. The care was provided by Dr. Peterheit who was not available and by a physicist who is no longer employed by the hospital. Mr. Crilly is familiar with the incident and has reviewed the record. The HDR brachytherapy form they currently use requires that the physicist list the number of steps and the spacing between steps as part of the written directive. This is then checked by the dosimetrist and the physician and the programming is checked by the physicist and compared to the directive. With this technique he feels there is no appreciable risk of misadministration. He could not speak to policies of the previous physicist, but he has discussed this with Dr. Peterheit who he reports has confidence in this method.

Mr. Crilly supports the dose estimate of 1.25 cGy to the skin. This would not be expected to produce any acute or long term reaction and the patient does not meet the criteria for the Long Term Medical Study Program. Mr. Crilly did not know if the patient was notified of the error.

Sincerely;

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Whittington".

Richard Whittington M.D.
Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology